LETTER OF INTENT

BETWEEN

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE

OF THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

AND

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE

OF THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS

CONCERNING

BILATERAL COOPERATION IN

INTEGRATED AIR POLICING

1. INTRODUCTION

The Minister of Defence of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Minister of Defence of the Kingdom of Belgium, hereinafter referred to as the "Participants",

Considering the friendly relations between the two countries, including specifically in the area of cooperation in defence matters,

Considering the desire to further optimise the existing bilateral cooperation in the area of security and defence, also expressed in the 2012 Benelux Declaration on cooperation in the area of defence, and to strengthen the relations between the Ministry of Defence of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Ministry of Defence of the Kingdom of Belgium,

Considering that the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg is an important Benelux partner and signatory to the 2012 Benelux Declaration on cooperation in the area of defence,

Hereby express the following intention:

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE LETTER OF INTENT

With regard to their common goal and with regard to the general context as set out in this Letter of Intent (LoI), the Participants express their joint intention to achieve synergy and integration in the area of Air Policing, including Quick Reaction Alert and national Renegade tasks.

3. BACKGROUND

The challenges presented by the interaction between operational demands and available capabilities have led to the so-called Ghent Initiative, aiming at broadening cooperation in the area of defence by pooling and sharing resources. In view of this and in view of the shared desire to improve the efficiency of their defence efforts, the Participants have decided to build on the 2012 Benelux Declaration on cooperation in the area of defence. The Participants' shared goal is to enhance military effectiveness by increasing cooperation between their armed forces, by sharing costs where possible and by increasing output for the benefit of their operational capabilities.

4. SCOPE

The scope of this LoI is to further optimise existing cooperation and to promote further interoperability and future capability development in order to:

- Achieve synergy and integration in the area of Air Policing, including Quick Reaction Alert and national Renegade tasks,

  Initiate and actively continue the necessary preparations to achieve the aforementioned goal, the legal preparations for which are vital to the creation of a solid basis for the execution of the aforementioned combined and integrated Air Policing tasks.

The Participants agree that it is of the utmost importance to keep the Minister for Home Affairs and the Greater Region, the Minister of Defence of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg actively informed of this matter.

5. FINAL PROVISIONS

This LoI, which does not create any rights or obligations under international law, enters into force on the date of the final signature of this LoI.

This LoI may be amended at any time, in writing, with the mutual consent of the Participants and may be terminated by either Participant at any time.

Any disputes regarding the application, interpretation or implementation of this LOI will be exclusively resolved by consultation and negotiations.

Drawn up in the English language and signed in duplicate:

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF
THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

Pieter DE CREM

Date: 23 October 2013

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF
THE KINGDOM THE NETHERLANDS

Jeanine HENNIS-PLASSCHAERT

Date: 23 October 2013